



UNDER SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

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COMPTROLLER

MAR 8 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE ARMY (FINANCIAL
MANAGEMENT AND COMPTROLLER)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE NAVY (FINANCIAL
MANAGEMENT AND COMPTROLLER)
ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE (FINANCIAL
MANAGEMENT AND COMPTROLLER)
COMPTROLLERS OF THE DEFENSE AGENCIES

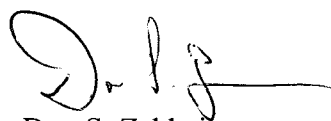
SUBJECT: Professional Development of Comptroller Personnel

Fiscal Year 2004 will again be challenging for the financial management community. The global War on Terrorism creates enormous pressure on all areas of the budget. We will be required to maintain high levels of readiness and pursue critical investments to transform our military capability. We also must press forward transforming the management of the Department. In particular, we must continue to advance the Business Management Modernization Program and other reform efforts that are critical to the Department's future.

The men and woman we ask to go in harm's way deserve all the resources we can provide for them. The American public demands, correctly, that we be able to demonstrate that we are good stewards of their hard-earned money. As I noted last year, these challenges demand a highly competent, technically proficient financial management workforce. Our financial management professionals need the skills to be able to find the solutions to our persistent problems.

Last year, the Congress gave us some increased flexibility in managing our civilian workforce, through its approval of the National Security Personnel System. Now our challenge is to implement this new personnel system, with pay banding that supports performance versus longevity, to take advantage of the management options it offers the Department. In addition, a proposed draft policy requiring professional certifications and credentialing will be out for full coordination soon. The proposed policy will affect personnel working in any job series where professional accounting is being performed.

A skilled, modern professional workforce needs continuous professional development of the highest caliber. I encourage financial management personnel throughout the Department to hone their financial management skills through continuous professional development. Participation in activities of professional organizations enhances the professionalism of the financial management community and prepares us to meet the present and future challenges.



Dov S. Zakheim